

GOVERNMENT OF SOMALIA**Head of State** President Mohammad Siyad Barre

Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Samantar
Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Mohammad Farah
Vice Prime Minister, Planning Hussein Kulmiye Afrah
Vice Prime Minister, Interior Ahmed Sulaiman Abdullah
Foreign Affairs Abdel-Rahman Jama Barre
Justice & Religious Affairs Hassan Abdulahi Farah
Industry Hussein Abdullahi Alasow
Commerce Mohamoud Haji Said
Public Works Musa Rabile Goud
Transport Jama Gaas Mucaawiye
Juba Valley Development Ahmed Habib Ahmed
Information Abdirashid Shaikh Ahmed
Labour & Sports Mire Aware Jama
Fisheries Adan Mohammad Ali
Education Abdullahi Mohammad Mireh
Culture & Higher Education Abdel-Salam Shaikh Hussain
Health Mohammad Shaikh Ali Munasar
Ports & Marine Transport Mahmoud Jelle Yusuf
Agriculture Abdirasak Mohammad Abubakar
Tourism Mohammad Omar Jays
Finance Mohammad Shaikh Osman
Posts & Telecommunications Yusuf Hassan Elmi
Water & Mineral Resources Ahmed Mahmoud Farah
Livestock Development & Forestry Bile Refleh Guled

Ministers of State in the President's Office

Foreign Affairs Mohammad Ali Hamud
Interior Mohamoud Mohammad Warsame
Political Affairs Abdalla Mohammad Fadil
Economic Affairs Abdel-Qasim Salad Hassan
Planning Usuf Ali Osman
Revenue Abdullahi Warsame Noor

nothing to dampen speculation about his age and ill health.

Increasingly, power has been transferred to Siyad Barre's son, General Maslah Mohammad Siyad. There is mounting speculation that he — rather than the official number two, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Samantar — is the president's chosen successor.

The discovery in June of yet another army-led coup plot underlined the continuing behind-the-scenes power struggle.

There was some progress on project work. Contracts for the World Bank-funded modernisation of Kisimayu, Berbera and Mogadishu

ports were due to be signed by the end of 1987. The bulk of civil works was expected to go to the low bidder, China Sichuan Corporation for Techno-Economic Co-operation.

Five consultants have prequalified for an order to do detailed designs for the estimated \$400 million Badhera dam, although finance has not been finalised. A \$12.5 million upgrading of Mogadishu's power network will go to tender in early 1988.

The US' Amoco Corporation signed a three-year oil exploration programme in May. And national carrier Somali Airlines was able to

raise the money to buy an Airbus A-310 for delivery in October 1988.

It was feared that the return of the drought would jeopardise the previous year's improvements in agricultural production. Output grew by an estimated 4-5 per cent in 1986.

The World Bank provided \$13.5 million for rainfed agricultural schemes to encourage nomad settlement. The Abidjan-based African Development Bank lent \$9 million for research and extension services. Further support — for food production schemes in the north and for the fisheries sector — was promised by the EEC.

Sudan**Tough measures face country still split by war**

THE closing months of 1987 brought the first concerted moves in two years to tackle Sudan's economic crisis. However, the outlook for the following 12 months remained clouded by continuing civil war in the south, the return of drought, and the weakness of a coalition government riven by factional disputes.

The period since the April 1986 general elections has been unsettled. Like its immediate post-independence predecessors, the coalition led by Prime Minister Sadiq el-Mahdi is dominated by the two northern religio-political dynasties — the Umma party, the political arm of the Mahdi family and its Ansar followers; and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), of the Khattmiya sect under the Mirghani family.

Their first year in government has shown them incapable of burying

longstanding grievances and rivalries. They stalled decisions on key issues which eventually led El-Mahdi to dismiss the cabinet in May 1987.

However, the new cabinet, announced in June after three weeks of intense negotiations, was only minimally different from its predecessor. Despite pledges from coalition members that agreement had finally been reached on disputed areas of the economy, Islamic law, and the war in the south, there was little surprise when it collapsed for the second time in August.

No agreement on a new coalition was found by the end of 1987, leaving members of the old cabinet holding the fort and the country working largely on automatic pilot. The chances of political wrangling giving way to policy and action in 1988 are remote, as any new coalition will inevitably involve the rival Umma and DUP supported by a variety of marginal southern groups.

Against this background, the fact that some progress was achieved on the long-discussed economic recovery programme owes more to the country's desperate need for external support than to any resolution of fundamental policy differences within the government. Better rains in 1986, and the recovery of Sudan's crucial cotton export market, improved the prospects for export earnings in 1986/87.

Statistics were one of the first casualties of Sudan's economic difficulties. However, estimates showed that earnings for the year would at least equal those of pre-drought 1983/84 at around \$750 million. As such, they were barely sufficient to cover the basic import requirements necessary to prevent further decline in the domestic economy, let alone meet the country's needs for current debt servicing of some \$900 million, or make an impression on its estimated \$3,500 million in debt arrears.

After months of prevarication,

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GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN

Supreme Council

Ahmed el-Mirghani (Chairman), Idriss el-Banna, Ali Hassan Tajeddin, Pacifico Lolik, Mohammed el-Hassan Abdullahi Yassin

Cabinet*

Prime Minister, Defence Sadiq el-Mahdi

Deputy Prime Minister Vacant

Foreign Affairs Mamoun Sinada

Interior Sidahmed el-Husseini

Attorney-General Abdel-Mahmoud Haj Salih

Local Government Red Choul Jok

Finance & Economic Planning Beshir Omer Mohammed Fadlalla

Cabinet Affairs Salah Abdel-Salaam el-Khalifa

Agriculture Omer Nour el-Daim

Animal Resources Vacant

Industry Mubarak Abdallah el-Fadi el-Mahdi

Irrigation Mohammad Beshir Jamaa

Transport & Communications Aldo Ajo Deng

Trade & Commerce Ibrahim Hassan Abdel-Jalil

Housing & Public Works Mohammed Tahir el-Jilani

Energy & Mining Adam Moussa Madibu

Culture & Information Altom Mohammed Altom

Labour Laurence Mode Kode

Education Bakri Ahmed Adeel

Health Hussein Suleiman Abu-Salih

Social Affairs & Zakat Rashida Ibrahim Abdel-Karim

Youth & Sports Hassan Mohammed Mustafa

Peace & Constitutional Conference Affairs Vacant

Public Service & Administrative Reform Vacant

Religious Affairs & Endowments Vacant

* A new cabinet is in the course of formation

the government made a determined effort in May to reach an accommodation with the IMF. This would pave the way for donors to restore levels of aid. It would also allow creditors to begin the tricky negotiations on a debt rescheduling package that would provide the levels of relief needed without setting precedents for other chronically indebted states.

Despite the disruptions caused by the May dissolution of the cabinet, an outline agreement on an interim recovery programme was finally reached with the IMF in August. Action from the international community was delayed pending a government display of the political will necessary to implement unpopular policy reforms. This demonstration finally came in October with the announcement of a near 45 per cent devaluation of the pound and hefty increases in the price of fuel, sugar and cement.

In December, a preliminary donors' meeting pledged around \$130 million in new aid, with promises of more. This would cover most of 1987/88's expected financing gap — excluding debt payments — of \$207 million. A full-scale consultative meeting is planned for April 1988, and negotiations are under way with the London Club. If successful, these will provide a mould-breaking way of dealing with the country's \$1,900 million commercial bank debts.

Negotiations with the Paris Club are expected to prove more tricky,

with the Sudanese government looking for concessionary terms of 30-35 year reschedulings, and creditor governments facing the problem of Sudan's arrears to the IMF. These stood at more than \$600 million by the end of 1987, and provide an apparently insurmountable obstacle to the fund resuming lending to Sudan under the terms normally demanded by the Paris Club.

However, with an apparent determination by the international community, headed by the US, to bring Sudan back to the fold, there were expectations that some formula would be found. The chief requirements are for the government to produce its promised four-year recovery programme by April, and continue with policy reforms — notably reducing government expenditure on the parastatal sector and increasing incentives for the public sector.

Given the riots which followed the October measures, such a programme will be a major challenge for Sudan's divided government, and one that it may prove unable to meet.

So far, it has failed to meet the challenges imposed by the civil war and the interlinked problem of the Islamic, or September, laws imposed by former president Jaafar Nimairi in 1983. The disarray within the coalition has enabled the opposition fundamentalist National Islamic Front to dictate the pace on both issues. Its demands for an

Islamic constitution are difficult for El-Mahdi to deny, given his role as a religious leader and the strong support within the conservative wing of the DUP. However, acceding to them will make an accommodation with the southern rebels under the aegis of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) impossible. During 1987, El-Mahdi reacted largely through prevarication, announcing that the September laws would be repealed without saying what would take their place.

Action on the issue cannot be delayed for much longer. Indications that some form of Islamic rule will be imposed on at least the north promise little for solving the problems in the south.

Despite some talks with non-government northern parties during the year, the SPLA showed no signs of wishing to negotiate. The traditional end-of-rainy-season offensive started on time, culminating in the taking of the key border town of Kurmuk in September.

For the Sudanese, the intransigence of both sides over the future of the south, and the prospects of continuing weak leadership in Khartoum, are a worrying combination.

They mirror the situation that precipitated the 1969 military coup that brought Nimairi to power. While the military appears reluctant to resume the mantle of government at present, a further deterioration, particularly in the south, could well change their minds in the not-too-distant future.

Syria

Asad rewarded for ending isolation

PRESIDENT Asad has the reputation of being the Arab world's shrewdest operator. This was put to the test in 1987, when the special challenges facing Syria obliged him to use all his tactical skills to defend Damascus' high-risk regional policies.

The year started with the country's international standing at rock bottom. Ostracised in Europe and the US as a sponsor of terrorism, Syria was shunned in the Arab world as an ally of an Iran apparently on

GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA

Head of State President Hafez Asad

Vice-Presidents Abdel-Halim Khaddam, Zuhair Masharq, Rifaat Asad

Cabinet

Prime Minister Mahmoud Zuabi

Deputy Prime Minister, Defence Major-General Mustafa Tias

Deputy Prime Minister, Social Services Mahmoud Qaddour

Deputy Prime Minister, Economic Affairs Salim Yassin

Agriculture & Agrarian Reform Mohammad Ghabbash

Higher Education Kamal Sharaf

Foreign Affairs Farouq al-Shara

Transport Yusef al-Ahmad

Interior Mohammad Harba

Local Administration Ahmed Diab

Information Mohammad Salman

Supply & Home Trade Hassan Saqqa

Economy & Foreign Trade Mohammad Imady

Culture Najah al-Attar

Irrigation Abdel-Rahman al-Madani

Industry Antoine Jubran

Presidential Affairs Wahib Fadhil

Electricity Kamel al-Baba

Tourism Adnan Qouli

Communications Murad Quwatli

Education Ghassan Halabi

Finance Khaled Mahayni

Health Dr Iyad Shatt

Oil & Mineral Resources Mtanios Habib

Awqaf (religious endowments) Abdel-Majid Trabulsi

Housing Mohammad Nour Intabi

Justice Khaled Ansari

Construction Marwan Farra

Social Affairs & Labour Haidar Bouzo

Ministers of State

Cabinet Affairs Yassin Rajjoui

Planning Sabah Baqjaji

Foreign Affairs Nasser Qaddour

Without Portfolio Abdel-Hamid Munajjid, Mohammad Jumaa, Ghazi Mustafa, Ali Khalil